

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for determining and maintaining dialog focus in a conversational speech system comprising the steps of:

presenting a command associated with an application to a dialog manager, the application associated with the command being one of a plurality of active applications that are unknown to the dialog manager;

the dialog manager determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events;

determining at least one method responsive to the command based on the current context;
and

executing the at least one method responsive to the command associated with the application; and

changing dialog focus to one of the active applications based on user interaction with the conversational system.

2. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of presenting a command includes the step of employing at least one multi-modal device for presenting the command.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the at least one multi-modal device for presenting the command includes one of a telephone, a computer, and a personal digital assistant.

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events includes the step of providing a linked list of all events in the multi-modal history.

5. (Original) The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the events in the multi-modal history includes at least one of events linked by time, by type, by transaction, by class and by dialog focus.

6. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of determining at least one method includes the step of referencing all active applications using a component control to determine the at least one method which is appropriate based on the current context of the command.

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the command is presented in a formal language such that a plurality of human utterances represent an action to be taken.

8. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events includes the step of maintaining a current dialog focus and a list of expected responses in the dialog manager to provide a reference for determining the current context.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of querying a user for one of information needed to resolve the current context and information needed to take an appropriate action.

10. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for determining and maintaining dialog focus in a conversational speech system, the method steps comprising:

presenting a command associated with an application to a dialog manager, the application associated with the command being one of a plurality of active applications that are unknown to the dialog manager;

the dialog manager determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events;

determining at least one method responsive to the command based on the current context;
~~and~~

executing the at least one method responsive to the command associated with the application; and

changing dialog focus to one of the active applications based on user interaction with the conversational system.

11. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of presenting a command includes the step of employing at least one multi-modal device for presenting the command.

12. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 11, wherein the at least one multi-modal device for presenting the command includes one of a telephone, a computer, and a personal digital assistant.

13. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events includes the step of providing a linked list of all events in the multi-modal history.

14. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 13, wherein the events in the multi-modal history include at least one of events linked by time, by type, by transaction, by class and by dialog focus.

15. (Currently Amended) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining at least one method includes the step of referencing all active applications using a component control to determine the at least one method which is appropriate based on the current context of the command.

16. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the command is presented in a formal language such that a plurality of human utterances represent an action to be taken.

17. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining a current context of the command by reviewing a multi-modal history of events includes the step of maintaining a dialog focus and a list of expected responses in the dialog manager to provide a reference for determining the current context.

18. (Original) The program storage device as recited in claim 10, further comprising the step of querying a user for one of information needed to resolve the current context and information needed to take an appropriate action.

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19. (Currently Amended) A system for determining and maintaining dialog focus in a conversational speech system comprising:

a dialog manager adapted to receive commands from a user, the dialog manager maintaining a current dialog focus for one of a plurality of active applications and a list of expected responses for determining a current context of the commands received;

a multi-modal history coupled to the dialog manager for maintaining an event list of all events which affected a state of the system, the multi-modal history adapted to provide input to the dialog manager for determining the current context of the commands received, wherein the events in the multi-modal history include change of dialog focus events; and

a control component adapted to select at least one method responsive to the commands received such that the system applies methods responsive to the commands for an appropriate application including one of the active applications.

20. (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the appropriate application further includes one of ~~an active application~~, an inactive application, an application with a graphical component and an application with other than a graphical component.

21. (Original) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the commands are input to the dialog manager by one of a telephone, a computer, and a personal digital assistant.

22. (Original) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the multi-modal history includes a linked list of all events to associate a given command to the appropriate application.

23. (Original) The system as recited in claim 22, wherein the events in the multi-modal history include at least one of events linked by time, by type, by transaction, by class and by dialog focus.

24. (Original) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the control component references all active applications to determine the at least one method which is appropriate based on the current context of the commands.

25. (Original) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the command is presented in a formal language such that a plurality of human utterances represent an action to be taken.